

Chairman's Report 2026

After several stop and starts the installation of a new entrance gate on the Clifford side of Bramham School was finally completed in the autumn of last year. This allows children arriving from the village a safer access into school grounds preventing the need to walk around the bend in the road to the main entrance. Yes, all involved would like to have further safety improvements around the school and its approaches but due to the school's location and lack of publicly owned land any options are extremely limited.

Your parish council continues to work with ward councillors, LCC highways and planning and Boston Spa Academy for the installation of a new pedestrian crossing on Clifford Moor Road outside the school and the provision of additional car parking on the school grounds with the demolishing of the former school caretaker's bungalow. These improvements were part of the planning conditions of the school's recent wider planning application approval. This should help in providing a safer crossing area for children attending the school and also reduce the number of cars parked on the road outside the school. Once again, we have been informed that work will take place during the school's summer holiday shutdown. We will wait and see!

Some of the four fixed speed indicator devices (SID's) your parish council purchased, and which were installed in the summer of 2024 by LCC highways, need to be relocated to provide more accurate readings. Several pick up vehicle speeds from outside the 20mph speed limit area so making the readings less usable in the constant battle with speeding vehicles. There seems to be only one person at LCC who deals with these SID's and the waiting time for any action takes an eternity. The parish council will continue to push for these SID's to be relocated from their previously approved locations so to provide more accurate data which will help in the struggle against speeders.

What can I say about dog fouling which I have not written about in most of my previous reports? Last year your council invested in dog poo bag dispensers and has spent more than £400 on bags to keep them stocked over the past year. As always there are those who abuse the system by taking big clumps of bags and those who think it's fun to pull the bags out and throw them around creating a litter problem. The bags are provided as a back up to dog walkers whose dog takes a loo break, and the dog walker has either not brought with them a poo bag or run out of poo bags on their walk. The bags provided are intended as a compliment to the ones dog owners/walkers purchase rather than instead. It is not intended to be a free supply of bags for all your dog's day to day needs. At one dispenser over two hundred bags were taken in just 16 days. Please only take the required amount for the need to clear up after your dog on that walk. Dog fouling has become an increasing problem on the playing fields at Rhodes Lane and Northway's. Football coaches are having to walk the pitches before the children and players start training or play a match and clear up piles left by irresponsible dog walkers. An ever-increasing number of commercial dog walkers are using the fields as an exercise area for their business where they exercise 5 or 6 dogs at a time and appear to have minimum control over all the dogs and their toileting. Some dog walkers have been spoken to when seen that they have failed to clean up after one of the dogs in their charge and that person has been met with abusive behaviour. Your parish council is in contact with the LCC dog warden for advice but there is little that can be done unless someone sees it happening and is prepared to follow through reporting to the dog warden. If the problem continues consideration has been given to banning at least commercial dog walkers from the fields and if it continues after that, banning all dogs from the fields. I know the problem with dog poo is a problem around the whole village on footpaths and verges and as I previously mentioned unless residents are prepared to report to the dog warden there is extraordinarily little that can be done. Once again, the minority are spoiling it for the majority.

Your parish council continues to collaborate with the trustees of the village hall in developing three new exciting projects around the hall for the benefit of the whole community. The first one is the installation of a new playground. The current one is over twenty years old and maintenance and repair cost mount on equipment of this age, so the logical way forward is to replace. The trustees and representatives of the council are collaborating with a preferred supplier to finalise a final design following feedback from consultation received from a household survey and at the village hall open day last year. The cost of a new playground is not inexpensive, and initial costs are in the region of £150k to £200k. The parish council has built up a playground fund since the current playground was installed which covers the maintenance and annual safety check of the site and this fund along with funds from the community infrastructure levy received from the builders of Shires Grove and other budgeted amounts will go towards delivering the new playground. The village hall has also funds to go towards the project but there is still in the region of £80k -£130k to be found from grant funding or other sources. So, my plea would be if anyone knows of any sources of funding to help deliver this playground, please do contact the clerk or the village hall.

The second project is the redevelopment of the garden area to the front of the village hall. The area is dated and not very user friendly and it is hoped to make the space a more inviting space for those hiring the hall and a place where residents can sit down, take the weight of their feet and watch the world go by. It is thought appropriate to fund this work with the interest money accrued on the Richard Alan Dunnington legacy fund which the parish council received a number of years ago as Alan was a great supporter of the hall. Time wise it is hoped to deliver this project within the next two years.

Thirdly and the project which is probably going to take a number of years to deliver is the amalgamation of the strip of land the parish council purchased to the rear of South View Cottages, Willow Glade, Bellwood Avenue and the village hall park into the village hall park. Currently the village green located at the bottom of Willow Lane, is owned by LCC and the parish council have worked with the council over several years to develop a plan to transfer the village green

title to the strip of land next to the village hall. LCC would then sell the old village green and share the proceeds of the sale with the parish council to develop the strip of land into a new village green, so securing the lands future. There are several hoops to jump through to achieve this both legally and physically, so it is extremely hard to give a date for completion of this project.

2025 marked the fiftieth anniversary of the Outlook magazine, produced and delivered by a band of volunteers every month to all households in the parish, approximately 850 homes. The parish council has and continues to support this worthwhile project, and it helps deliver and keep residents of the village updated on what your parish council is undertaking with its monthly column and also with this report and the annual accounts. I wish to put on record my congratulation and thank you to all those who are or have been involved with the magazine over the past 50 years and I wish the magazine continued success for the next 50 years.

All the above is just a highlight of some of the tasks which your parish council, its members and clerk have carried out over the past year, but just to expand, in brief, here are some of the other tasks carried out by your elected representatives and clerk which don't always get mentioned, representations on the Police and community together panel, Diggle's First Fruit charity, Charity of Richard Dawson, Yorkshire Local Council Association, Town and Parish Council Forum, studying all planning applications submitted in the parish and making representations where required, seeking contractors to undertake work for the upkeep of Northway's Playing Field, Clifford Community Sports Ground and their clubhouses, St Edwards Field and the area around the war memorial, Public right of ways surveys and reporting, restocking the dog poo dispensers, manning the mobile SID, health and safety inspection, budget and audit committee, replying to consultations and request from LCC for information and organising events such as the remembrance service and carol singing and participation in national events such as the beacon lighting. All tasks completed by your parish council but often go unnoticed.

As always, I would like to thank all my colleagues on the parish council and give them my personal thanks for all the tremendous amount of work they undertake during the year for no personal gain to themselves but for the benefit of the community. These thanks also extend to their partners and families who support them undertaking their roles and duties. I would also like to record my personal thanks to Nancy, clerk to the parish council, who undertakes the endless amount of administration of the council and keeps your elected representatives on the right path. Without Nancy I doubt the council would run as efficiently as it does, so thank you Nancy.

Once again, I will end this report by thanking all the residents of Clifford for your support throughout the year and for all what you do to make Clifford a place we call home.

Thank you.

Councillor Nicholas P. P. Fawcett – Chairman of Clifford Parish Council 2025/2026

Financial Statement 2025-2026 (Unaudited figures)

Balance as at 31 st March 2025	461,704
Add total income	69,784
Total	531,488
Less total expenditure	39,835
Balance as at 31 March 2026	491,653
<i>Represented by</i>	
Unity Trust Current Account	8,964
Unity Trust Deposit Account	61,260
CCLA Account 1	331,147
CCLA Account 2	62,512
Santander Business Bond Maturity Account	27,771
Total	491,654
The balances include the following in earmarked funds:	
Northways Field maintenance and development	19,075
Playground maintenance and development	46,557
Parish Repairs and Improvements	7,333
St Edwards green space	18,886
Allotment bonds	1,850
Allotment fund	4,257
CIL Funds	42,475
Election expenses	475
Clifford Community Sports Ground	25,000
Land off South View	25,000
Legacy fund (estate of Richard Alan Dunnington)	219,017
Assisted crossing at War Memorial	10,000
Bramham Primary School Entrance	7,495
Total earmarked funds	427,420
General reserve	64,234

Any elector may inspect the full accounts during office hours by arrangement with the clerk